



Meeting with the City of Sheboygan
Tuesday, September 21, 2004, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

People in attendance

Tom Holton, City of Sheboygan
Steve Sokolowski, City of Sheboygan
Ron McDonald, City of Sheboygan
Jeff Agee-Aguayo, Bay-Lakes RPC

Casey Newman, WisDOT BOP
Al Stanek, WisDOT BOP
Chris Culotta, WisDOT District 3
Jonquil Johnston, WisDOT BOP

- 1) Overview of WisDOT's meeting purpose and WisDOT's long-range plan, *Connections 2030*, by WisDOT staff: The meeting began at 10:00 with introductions. Casey Newman, WisDOT, gave an overview of WisDOT's long-range plan *Connections 2030*. WisDOT is seeking input on transportation planning issues from larger Wisconsin cities at this point. *Connections 2030* is scheduled to be completed in 2006.
- 2) Gathering of input from City of Sheboygan: Staff from the City of Sheboygan discussed the following:

Growth

Sheboygan is growing to the south and to the north. The growth is somewhat limited due to the adjacent Towns (Town of Wilson to the South and Town of Sheboygan to the North) policies to discourage annexation to the City. Growth of the City is also limited by Lake Michigan to the East and I-43 to the West.

City staff indicated that outward expansion is possible and encouraged, however, due to the boundary constraints noted above, it is more likely that the City will have to focus on infill and redevelopment. The City has completed the South Pier Development Plan for redevelopment along the Sheboygan River and Lake Michigan. This plan goals are:

- ☐ Revitalize and redevelop underutilized waterfront property with economically and environmentally sustainable uses.
- ☐ Provide continuous pedestrian experience along the Sheboygan's river and lakefront, with public access and connections to regional trail systems.
- ☐ Promote a mixed use development encouraging water related uses.
- ☐ Build upon Sheboygan's maritime identity.
- ☐ Create an architecturally cohesive district with a distinct identity.
- ☐ Promote a balance between public use and access and private economic development.

- ❑ Improve water-based recreational facilities and navigational access to the Sheboygan River.
- ❑ Establish Sheboygan as a regional waterfront destination attraction.
- ❑ Establish "the Shanties" zone, envisioned as a lively fishing, boating and water sports centered commercial zone lining the south bank of the Sheboygan River. The goal is to create a vibrant 24-hour street life with a mix of fishing shanties, restaurants, art galleries, marine shops, water sports shops, artists and live/work lofts and amusement venues. Thus, the Shanties will entice the tourist and resident alike with specialty retail, convenience goods, entertainment and dining opportunities.
- ❑ Establish "the Lofts" zone, envisioned as neighborhood that provides a place where residents can find their own space in an alternative live/work lofts and apartment living, centered on beach and water activities. Buildings along the street facing the river extend the retail shopping of the "Shanties" but the primary use of this zone will be residential with associated recreational opportunities and convenience shopping available for residents.
- ❑ Establish "the Dunes" zone, an area with family centered destination attractions along the Lake Michigan Shoreland. Evoking images of the early 20th century waterfront resort lodges, this family centered resort will provide year round family vacation attractions with a hotel waterpark, and stunning views of the lake, and also meets the needs of the community by providing a business conference and banquet center. Detached condominiums are also included for extended stays. Public access of the waterfront is maintained with pedestrian corridors through this zone to the lakeshore at multiple locations.
- ❑ Establish "the Beach" zone which will reserve the lakefront as public open space. People will be able to watch windsurfers ride waves, anglers catch fish and a group of school children eagerly await a rocket launch from the end of the pier. Restoration of the sand dunes creates the Lakeshore Eco-Park with facilities for beach use, fish cleaning and a "Mission Control" for Sheboygan's "Rockets for Schools" program.
- ❑ A pedestrian bridge, with year round accessibility, was proposed as part of South Pier's master development plan to provide a vital pedestrian connection between businesses and residences on Sheboygan's riverfront and lakefront. Like other prominent structures in the City, the pedestrian bridge could become another Sheboygan landmark and tourist attraction. The pedestrian bridge will connect existing urban trails within the City and Sheboygan County's Old Plank Road Trail to trails on the South Pier peninsula. The bridge will need to be movable to allow navigability of the Sheboygan River and provide pedestrian access between Sheboygan's downtown, riverfront, and South Pier District.

SOUTH PIER REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

STATUS REPORT: The 42-acre Brownfield site, at the convergence of the Sheboygan River and Lake Michigan, was formerly owned by C. Reiss Coal Company. For over 100 years, the property was used for storage of coal, salt, fertilizer, and petroleum. The land is the last significant piece of municipal land on Lake Michigan's eastern shore that remains available for development in the City of Sheboygan. Since acquisition of the parcel, an enormous amount of time, energy, local and private financial resources, and state and federal aids and grants have been committed to the mixed-use redevelopment project. Based on an estimated tax base increase of over \$100 million during the life of the TIF District, the City is undertaking over \$12 million in public infrastructure improvements, including over \$3 million in remediation costs specified in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources approved Remedial Action Plan for the site.

South Pier Plan:

- ❑ Since acquiring the property in October of 2001, City officials have been working with SmithGroup JJR to create a concept plan, site plan, and design guidelines for South Pier. After receiving a considerable amount of public input, a concept plan design guidelines were created for the mixed-use development (i.e., family resort development, riverfront promenade, lakefront eco park and trails, retail and office development, live/work development, family attraction development, etc.)
- ❑ The concept plan and design guidelines were based on the following project goals:
 - Revitalize and redevelop underutilized waterfront property with economically and environmentally sustainable uses.
 - Promote a mixed-use development encouraging water-related uses.
 - Create an architecturally cohesive district with a distinct identity.
 - Provide a continuous pedestrian experience along Sheboygan's waterfront, with connections to regional trail systems.
 - Promote a balance between private economic development and public use and access.
 - Stimulate reinvestment in Sheboygan's Central Business District.
 - Improve water-based recreational facilities and navigational access to the Sheboygan River.
 - Establish Sheboygan as a regional waterfront destination attraction.
 - Build upon Sheboygan's maritime identity.

- Seek public / private opportunities and funding sources that minimize negative impacts on local taxpayers.

Public Improvements:

- ❑ Hot spot removal and demolition were completed in late March of 2003. Placement an engineered barrier in certain locations began in 2003, with completion in 2004. Additional monitoring wells were placed on the site.
- ❑ Utility work and seawall replacement were completed in 2003.
- ❑ The lakefront beach restoration project, including a lakefront trail and cordwalk, began in the Fall of 2003, with completion in June of 2004.
- ❑ Street construction, a riverfront promenade, and final restoration (landscaping, streetscape, site restoration, etc.) were completed in June of 2004.

Resort Development: In July of 2003, City officials executed a development agreement with representatives of The Great Lakes Companies, Inc., a major hotel and resort development and management company based in Madison, Wisconsin, to construct a \$54 million 183-room all-suite resort, with an indoor water park, first-class restaurant, spa, fitness center, arcade, retail shops, and 64 luxury rental condominiums. Great Lakes plans to create over 300 full and part-time jobs. As part of the resort project, the City is constructing a 1,000 person capacity convention center utilizing room tax dollars.

The resort and conference center opened in June of 2004. It is the critical anchor tenant that will help facilitate: further development on the remaining 20 acres of the site, new jobs for Wisconsin residents, an increase in local and state tax revenues, and additional tourism revenue throughout the Sheboygan area. Sheboygan County is now ranked as the 9th greatest tourism dollar-generating county in Wisconsin, home of the 2004 PGA Championship, and the third ranked golf destination in the United States.

County Highway LS is a route that city staff feels would see increased usage with development on the northern side of Sheboygan. Extension of Taylor Drive north was discussed.

Wal-mart has considered building two super centers - one on the north side (Town of Sheboygan) and one on the south side (City of Sheboygan) of Sheboygan. The north side location is a controversial site. The south side, at State Highway 28 and Taylor, has received an approved conditional use permit to construct the super center. However, the City, Wal-Mart and WisDot are still discussing how best to address the traffic implications.

Recently Acuity Insurance constructed an 82,000 square foot addition to their existing facility, basically doubling in size (approximately 175,000 square feet). The Acuity addition greatly reinforced the City of Sheboygan's goal in the ability for the City to have one of its largest employers and community leaders continue to grow in its current setting. This expansion of a high quality, first-rate business and campus at this highly visible location projects an image of quality at a major gateway to the community. Acuity currently has approximately 800-1,000 employees and the addition could add an additional 600-800 jobs.

The city's industrial park, located on the southwest side of the city near I-43, has space available and excellent access to the interstate. A long-term goal is to shift most manufacturing in the city into this area.

Water Transportation

Staff noted Sheboygan would like to attract Lake Michigan cruise vessels into the city harbor for tourism. There is recent trend of European-based cruise companies offering packages on Lake Michigan shores. Sheboygan would like to use its lakefront and hotel assets to increase tourism. The harbor would require dredging to accommodate cruise vessels.

Pedestrian/Bicycle

The City of Sheboygan has a trail that connects to the Old Plank. Currently, the off-road portion of the trail ends at I-43 and continues through the rest of the City on designated street routes. Sheboygan staff would like to see the off-road trail extended as an urban trail through Sheboygan to the Sheboygan River. A network of trail connections has been planned, but not implemented. There are other trails that would tie into the network. Sheboygan staff support increased Transportation Enhancement funds for pedestrian and bicycle facilities. They see a strong economic benefit from community trails.

Transit

Ozaukee County transit has connections to Milwaukee transit. Sheboygan staff sees a future need for commuter connections from Sheboygan to Milwaukee. They would like to explore working with adjacent counties to provide wider service options.

Sheboygan's city bus system is a fixed route operation. They have looked at fixed route alternatives, including the use of smaller buses. They are working on a new transit development plan, which is looking at the feasibility of a deviated route system for evenings and weekends. Equipment maintenance is a priority for Sheboygan's transit system. Their fleet is aging. Sheboygan is currently one of two cities in Wisconsin with a wheel tax, with revenue directed to the general fund. Sheboygan's wheel tax sunsets in 2006. The Town of Sheboygan does not contribute to transit costs.

The City is concerned about the reach of transit service as development occurs on the fringes of the community. The Wal-mart being considered for the north side is expected to be located within the Town of Sheboygan (not a participating municipality with Sheboygan Transit). Another transit concern is RCS, a local community services organization. RCS is considering a relocation on the edge of Sheboygan. Elderly and disabled service will also be a concern if transit plans are not able to be implemented.

The City of Sheboygan staff support state enabling legislation for a dedicated revenue source for transit.

Intercity bus service through Greyhound is still available in Sheboygan.

Freight

City staff stated a limited number of businesses in Sheboygan rely on freight rail, but they want to preserve rail options for industry. There is one rail spur routed into the central part of Sheboygan. Businesses on the north and west sides of the city use rail.

Funding

The City of Sheboygan staff stated they would like to see financing options and project performance measures included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Interstate Access

City staff expressed their interest in seeing State Highway 23 is expanded to four-lanes to Fond du Lac. City of Sheboygan staff expressed interest in seeing four-lanes extended to Mauston in Central Wisconsin for access to Interstate 90/94. Staff also recommended that WisDOT assess the need for additional east-west corridors as part of the planning process.